

Basic Career Counseling

May 30, 2003

Integration Activities

Concepts

Skills 1

Skills 2

Integration Activities

• • • Individual Activities • • •

1. Lesson Summary

Cut out the following summary card and place it in a visible location for two weeks

Basic Career Counseling – Concepts

The main ideas of this lesson are:

1. The helping process is a shared process through which a professional helper empowers someone to understand a problem, plan solutions, and implement meaningful change.
2. Career counseling at DWS uses the professional helping process to provide employment services that help customers attain self-sufficiency or increased income in a satisfying career.
3. The four phases of the career counseling process are:
 - Collecting information
 - Assessing customers
 - Referring to resources
 - Evaluating progress

Integration Activities

• • • Individual Activities • • •

2. Change and the Helping Process

Review the definition of the helping process, and then complete the table by answering the question in each box.

	Changes	Attitudes and Emotions
Customer	What organizational, work role or personal changes typically prompt customers to seek help at your DWS employment center?	What attitudes or emotions might a customer have as they begin to work with you in the helping process?
Counselor	What positive changes, outcomes, or goals do you encourage?	What attitudes, skills, and resources best help you support meaningful change in your customers' lives?

Integration Activities

• • • Individual Activities • • •

3. How Do I CARE?

Review your appointments, activities, and meetings for the past week. To which phase of the career counseling process do they relate? List them in the appropriate boxes then answer the questions below.

Collect information	Assess the customer
Refer to resources	Evaluate progress

What did you learn from this review?

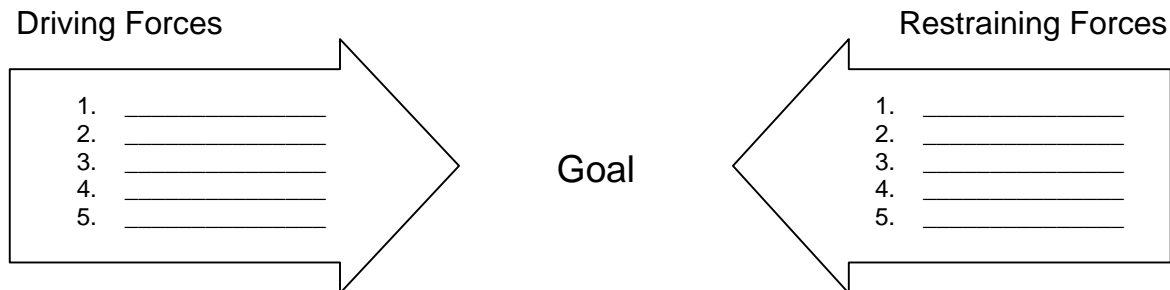
What changes, if any, will you make in the way you use your time with customers and other DWS staff?

Integration Activities

• • • Group Activities • • •

1. Force Field Analysis

Force field analysis is a useful exercise to clarify a problem and find solutions that are responsive to specific obstacles to goal achievement.



In this group activity, lead a discussion that looks at both driving and restraining forces in common career counseling activities. Begin by writing one of the following phases of career counseling in the center of the chalkboard. This is the goal.

- Collecting information
- Assessing customers
- Referring to resources
- Evaluating progress

On one side of the goal list positive, driving forces. These could be skills, attitudes, policy, procedures, programs, tools, or other resources. List negative, restraining forces on the other side of the goal. After creating each list lead a discussion to explore the following questions:

1. What supports and enhances the driving forces for this phase of career counseling?
2. What removes or minimizes the restraining forces that hinder this phase of career counseling?
3. What best practices does this review suggest?

Note: This exercise may be repeated with goals other than the phases of career counseling, including SMART goals, customer barriers, etc.

Integration Activities

• • • Individual Activities • • •

1. Lesson Summary

Cut out the following summary card and place it in a visible location for two weeks

Basic Career Counseling – Skills I

The main ideas of this lesson are:

1. Use critical thinking skills when collecting customer information by asking:
 - a. Do I need more information?
 - b. Is there anything to clarify?
 - c. What assumptions have I made?
 - d. Are inventories or tests needed?
2. When assessing customers focus on their strengths before potential barriers
3. Refer customers to specific, relevant employment resources. The Career Counseling Toolbox lists career counseling resources.
4. Open invitations, business cards, and words of support are tools for informal evaluation and monitoring.

Integration Activities

• • • Individual Activities • • •

2. Career Counseling Tools (May be complete with Group Activity #1.)

What tools are available to you as an Employment Counselor?

There are a variety of formal assessment tools that can help you understand a customer's interests, skills, and abilities. Categories for these tools include career exploration, job search, clerical proficiency, interest inventory, basic skills, aptitude and ability, vocational characteristics, and personality characteristics.

Complete the following table by listing up to six tools available in your employment center. An example is provided below.

Category	Name	Purpose
Career Exploration	CHOICES	Profile career interests and transferable work skills.

Integration Activities

• • • Individual Activities • • •

3. What Could I Do Even Better? (To be completed each day for one week.)

After receiving approval from your customer, record a conversation.

Fold a piece of paper in half and label one column “Don’t Understand”, and the other column “Understand.”

While listening to the taped conversation, list the things that you feel you understand very well, and those things that still need clarification.

Note that sometimes we move too quickly through conversations without gaining the knowledge needed for effective employment counseling. Critical thinking skills enable counselors to be more efficient and effective.

Understand	Don't Understand

4. Appropriate Referrals (To be completed each day for one week.)

Consider your most recent customer. Make a list of resources that are appropriate for his/her experience, skills, education, needs, and interests. Distribute your list of resources into three categories (1) the customer’s personal/family resources, (2) DWS resources and (3) other agency, community, state, and national employment resources. Try to include at least resource per category.

Integration Activities

• • • *Group Activities* • • •

1. Guest Speaker

Invite a local employment center or regional testing expert to review the assessment tools that are currently available for DWS employment counselors. Important discussion questions include:

1. What are the current DWS assessment tools?
2. What is the purpose of each tool?
3. When is it appropriate to use each tool?
4. What can a testing expert help me understand about my customers?

Integration Activities

• • • Individual Activities • • •

1. Lesson Summary

Cut out the following summary card and place it in a visible location for two weeks

Basic Career Counseling – Skills II

The main ideas of this lesson are:

1. You will work more effectively with your customers when you help them set SMART goals--goals that are **s**pecific, **m**easurable, **a**ttainable, **r**elevant and **t**rackable.
2. It is important to recognize that the helping (CARE) process is cyclical. You will continue to **c**ollect information, **a**ssess customers, **r**efer customers to resources, and **e**valuate progress.
3. Keeping notes is an effective way to help you track customer goals and progress.

Integration Activities

• • • Individual Activities • • •

2. Writing SMART Goals

Customer #1.

Mark is 21 years old. He recently returned from living in another country for two years. He has no formal education beyond high school. He expresses a desire to work in construction management.

Customer #2.

As a result of company downsizing, Ed (age 44) was recently laid off from the tech company where he has worked for nearly 20 years. He holds several certifications in computer networking. He would like to continue working as a network administrator.

Customer #3

Recently divorced, Tamara (age 37) has not had a job since working in fast food as a high school student. Her children all attend school during the day and she hopes to find a job that will allow her to be home with her children in the evening.

While she has no formal education beyond a high school diploma, she has excellent keyboarding skills and is very competent in word processing and database programs.

3. SMART Goal Review (To be completed each day for one week.)

Review the goals you set for one of your customers today and determine whether or not they are SMART goals. If they are not SMART goals, draft some new goals that can be modified with the customer during your next interview.

Integration Activities

• • • Group Activities • • •

1. Develop a Plan For Me

Ask the employees to break into pairs (counselor and customer). Have each “customer” share a goal with their “counselor”. Give them ten minutes to develop a plan to accomplish the goal (using SMART goals). At the conclusion of the time, the employees switch roles and repeat the exercise.

Lead a discussion allowing the employees to share what they learned about developing plans using SMART goals.

In the discussion bring out:

- It is not easy to make plans for someone else
- Developing a plan requires collaboration
- Developing a plan requires time
- To be effective, the counselor needs to use the helping skills discussed in Module 1.

2. Writing SMART Goals Group Review

After the employees have completed individual activity 2 (Writing SMART Goals), lead a discussion allowing them to share their ideas with one another.

Possible topics for discussion include:

- There may not be one “best” set of goals.
- Two heads are better than one (and sometimes three is better than two)
- Sometimes we need to collect more information in order to set effective goals.